duct; but unsure of any place to stand my cycle safely, I had to be satisfied with the top deck of the street-cars. First stop at the *Mercure.* I am trying to get a tobacconist's license for Emmanuel Signoret's widow; I have already spoken of this to Fontaine; the request that she must send to the Ministry will be approved by several carefully chosen signatures; and Vallette and I decide on this choice. Mme Signoret will never know how irksome these proceedings are to me.

I reach the rue d'Assas by crossing the Luxembourg. Since I have been paying more attention to people, I pay less attention to nature. About ten years ago every shadow, every light would have vibrated within me. Yet I did see the early iris shoots. . . .

Excellent lunch at the Jean Schlumbergers* where I am served at dessert with that wild-rose jam which strives so savagely to seem Oriental and which I already liked at Braffy.

At two o'clock, call on Leon Blum. A very pleasant thing about him is that he always receives you as if he had seen you the day before. Conversation flourishes easily between us. His book on marriage must be finished in a month.[1] He is writing it almost as fast as his pen can function. I am not sure he is wrong. The artist in him hasn't any great value, and his sentence, like Stendhal's, does not need to go out of its way to achieve anything more than the mere movement of his thought, which flows from his mouth or his pen at once abundant and clear — clearer, to be sure, than abundant, without any noticeable *Schaudern* — but, as a consequence, easily and completely expressible; having a beginning and an end and always properly clothed. You cannot imagine a more exact, clearer, more elegant, easier summary than L6on Blum can give, on the spur of the moment, of an event or a book or a play. What an excellent committee chairman he must be in the Conseil d*fitat! Oh, if politics did not bend all his thoughts, what a keen critic

he would be! But he judges things and people according to his opinions and not according to his taste. He has less confidence in his taste than in his opinions and prefers to distort the former rather than to seem to contradict himself. You can't be always quite sure that he likes everything he says he likes, but you can be sure that he thinks he likes it and knows why.

Monday

The disorder in my mind reflects the disorder in my house, where every room remains **at a standstill/*

Last night I went to bed, without writing anything, at eight thirty, crushed by the need for sleep. But I couldn't go to sleep. . . . Impossible to decide whether or not to leave for Berlin; impossible to decide even whether or not I want to go. Let myself be taken there? Yes, per-

[1] *Du manage* was in fact published in 1907.